LABOUR MONTHLY

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Crisis of the Labour Party * R.P.D.

Behind the Potted Plants at Southport * John Horner

Turning Point for Peace * Gordon Schaffer

*

Unpublished Letters of Frederick Engels

October, 1955

One shilling and sixpence

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STRIKING ECHOES

ON PAGE 447 John Horner reviews the 87th Trades Union Congress at Southport. Here is a description of the 18th T.U.C. held exactly 70 years earlier, which passed a resolution setting up a Labour Electoral Association—to get working men accepted as candidates for the Liberal Party. A trade unionist correspondent wrote in *The Commonweal* that it met 'in circumstances which give unusual interest to its deliberations', for an economic offensive was just being unleashed. He quoted a newspaper which had deplored a number of strikes, and had considered that 'the resources of civilisation, if wisely used, would prevent them. *Cannot the Trades Union Congress now sitting assist to solve the problem?*' The correspondent then fiercely criticises the opening speaker, who 'congratulates himself and us that we have grown out of the necessity of defending our unions against the attacks of a hostile Press'. The account goes on to lambast him for dwelling 'with unction upon what he terms the "better side" of the work of the Trade Unions in making people thrifty. I deny that this is the "better side" or any side at all of the work for which Trades Unions were established'. The indignant correspondent comments: *'I did not join a Trades Union to be taught thrift, but, by combination with my fellows, to try and get the results of our labour*, or at least to minimise the robbery which we workers must endure so long as we allow a class to monopolise the means of production'. Today, 70 years later, there are still attacks, both open and covert, and not only from employers, on such a basic weapon of defence as *The Right To Strike*. No wonder then, that our penny reprint of Arthur Horner's admirable article of that name has been in heavy demand from trade union branches. (We have had to reprint it three times; copies are still available, but orders have to be taken in strict rotation. See page 472.)

A Message from William Morris

HERE is a message straight from William Morris, writing in *The Commonweal* of 1885, to every LABOUR MONTHLY reader: 'The following methods of aiding the circulation', he writes, 'should be noted and acted upon, and further suggestions should be sent by its friends and supporters.

'1. Get annual subscribers,' he stresses, 'the journal is sent post free for 12 months to any address in Britain, and America, Germany, France, Canada, etc.

'2. Take a few copies of each issue and a contents bill to some of the newsagents in the vicinity of your dwelling or workshop. Get them exposed for sale and the contents bill displayed, and promise to pay for what is left unsold.

'3. Take a few copies to meetings and sell them among the audience.

'4. Organise small selling parties for public meetings.'

Well, there's William Morris's advice, and it's good!

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Notes of the Month

Crisis of the Labour Party

'After he had examined the Conservative and Liberal Party organisations about half a century ago, A. L. Lowell wrote: "Both are shams, but with this difference, that the Conservative organisation is a transparent, and the Liberal an opaque, sham." It can be argued that if the word "Labour" is substituted for "Liberal", there is a sense in which Lowell's remark is equally appropriate today.'

R. T. McKENZIE, British Political Parties, 1954, p. 581.

WHEN the Labour Party Conference meets at Margate in October, it will be impossible not to sense the difference from the Trades Union Congress which met in the preceding month at Southport. The difference does not lie in the organisations represented, which, apart from the addition of local representatives, are mainly the same. It does not lie in the questions discussed; for, despite the shift of emphasis from industrial policy to electoral and parliamentary policy, the principal questions, whether of peace or the economic situation, are at bottom the same. It does not even lie in the general line of policy adopted or likely to be adopted; for the right wing still dominates both conferences. Nevertheless,

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there is an unmistakable and significant difference in the character of the proceedings. And this difference brings us close to the heart of the present problem of the political labour movement.

A Parliament of Labour

Whatever the weaknesses of the policies and decisions of Southport, there could be no doubt that the Trades Union Congress revealed to the world a veritable Parliament of Labour, reflecting, despite all inadequacies of representation, eight million organised workers, whose solidarity is the strongest basis of democratic development in Britain. Great issues were debated. Opposing spokesmen and leaders joined battle, marshalling millions on either side in support. The dominant leadership of the General Council could still control an increasingly precarious majority with an average of four to five million votes. But the militant alternative policy, presented by front-rank union leaders of unquestioned authority alongside delegates from the workshops, and embracing all economic, domestic and international issues in a coherent programme which was at once a challenge to the right wing and to capitalism and a constructive demonstration of the path forward for the working class, was able to win a consistent vote of three to three and a half millions, never falling below two and a half millions. In eight divisions where votes were counted the General Council received an average vote of 4,414,000. In the same eight divisions the militant opposition, the majority of whose most prominent leaders and spokesmen were communist trade unionists, fighting for a policy which was in fact a common policy of communist and non-communist progressive trade unionists in the interests of the whole movement, but which was widely denounced by the General Council spokesmen as corresponding to communist policy, registered an average vote of 3,271,000.

A Living Confrontation

Here was a living confrontation of the alternative policies and leadership within the organised working class. Here was a rough measure—however crude the methods, and with some still surviving undemocratic barriers in certain cases and lack of consultation of the workers—of the relative strength and balance of forces in the present stage of the struggle, which is nothing less than the battle for the future of the working class and of socialism. This confrontation and this relative measure of real strength in the organised working class was made possible by the traditional methods of

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working class democracy, which, in the face of all attacks and partial infringements, the workers have nevertheless in general been able to maintain and even extend in the trade union movement. How much of this real confrontation within the working class will be able to be reflected through the distorting mirror of Margate?

Heart of the Working Class

Nor was this confrontation only a question of numbers. The developing alliance of the progressive sections of trade unionism revealed at Southport, while still showing some variations in its composition on different issues, nevertheless showed a considerable consistency in its general character, and was throughout essentially based on and drew into its ranks the main key sections of the industrial working class, the heart of the nation's productive strength, the embattled power of Labour. These were also the unions where working class democracy was most developed. The voting strength of the General Council was mainly based on votes cast with little or no opportunities of discussion by the membership on the issues on which their opinions were supposed to be expressed.

Portent for the Future

Thus the significance of the trend revealed at Southport was greater than the actual figures showed. This significance was not lost on observers, whatever their political colour. Hence the very qualified and tepid praise of the ruling class press commentators for the reactionary decisions achieved by the General Council:

> Leadership is confined to what is possible in the prevailing mood of the delegates, and within the limits thus set the results of the debates are encouraging. (*The Times*, September 10.)

> A leader ceases to lead if he becomes too remote from the rank and file; and to attend a Trades Union Congress is to know that far more than a line of potted plants separates the platform from a large number of the delegates. (*Economist*, September 10.)

Neither friend nor foe could fail to see the line of march of the decisive battalions of the working class, which has become increasingly marked during these recent years at the Trades Union Congress. Therefore Southport, despite the mainly reactionary decisions registered, and the obvious grave menace of those decisions in preparing the way for the government and employers' offensive which is now threatening, was nevertheless also and at the same time a conference full of vitality, of lively and healthy controversy, a microcosm of the organised working class battling to find its way forward, a conference of underlying hope for the future.

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Militancy on the March

This advancing strength and consciousness of the progressive forces of the working class was not merely expressed in the speeches and votes of a powerful body of delegates within the walls of a conference hall. The advance of the left within the conference was the direct reflection of the advancing militancy and action of the working class outside. In vain the Chairman of the Trades Union Congress might seek in his presidential address to give vent to the hatred and contempt for the ordinary workers felt by every right wing bureaucrat, when he simultaneously denounced the workers for voting Tory and at the same time in the next breath denounced the workers for their militancy and strikes as equivalent to living in a 'fool's paradise' and entering on the path of 'industrial suicide'.

Seven Millions on the Move

But the General Council dared not place before the Congress a resolution for wage restraint, although all their speeches pointed in that direction. Instead, they could only manœuvre to secure the rejection of a resolution repudiating wage restraint, by supporting an amendment for wage increases. They dared not openly support wage restraint when seven million workers were putting in demands for wage increases. Industrial action in Britain, though still low in comparison with the majority of major industrial countries, has begun to rise in the most recent period. Whereas over the whole period 1947-54, according to a recent International Labour Office return, the annual number of working days lost through industrial disputes per thousand employed was near the bottom in Britain with an average of 151, as against 1,244 in France and 1,515 in the United States, in 1954 the British figure was 190, as against 210 in France and 850 in the United States. 1955 would undoubtedly show a further advance. The fact that the Labour Party leadership failed to respond to and win support from the rising militancy of the workers in the election of May, 1955, is no disproof of the fact of that rising militancy.

From Southport to Margate

And Margate? How far will this fight of seven million workers be expressed at Margate? How far will this living confrontation of alternative policies and leadership within the organised working class, which was faithfully reflected at Southport, and which is the

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very heart of the battle of working class politics today, and of the battle for the future of socialism, find any corresponding powerful and effective expression at Margate? The organisations represented are mainly the same, in slightly smaller proportions, with the addition of constituency delegates. The latter addition, by bringing in directly some voice of the local rank and file, makes for greater vitality, since the trades councils, which founded the Trades Union Congress, have been excluded from the nest by the powerful cuckoo they fostered. The great questions of policy, of the worsening economic situation, of living standards, of industry and nationalisation, of peace and the international situation, are in essence the same. The feeling of the workers is the same.

Gagging the Left

But the difference between the character of the two conferences, formally based on the same organisations, stands out and becomes more glaring every year. The majority of the most prominent and recognised leaders of the left, of the three and a half millions at Southport, that is, of the key sections of the workers, of the decisive battalions of the army of Labour, who made the running at Southport, who were able to present a consistent and constructive alternative programme to the ruinous right wing policy, and whose organisations provide no small part of the finances of the Labour Party, will be artificially excluded from Margate. Hence no consistent alternative policy will be allowed to be presented at Margate; for such partially or erratically dissident leaders as have so far been sufficiently agile to survive the successive purges are to a considerable degree straitjacketed by the doctrine of collective leadership or gagged by threats of past and future discipline. The voice of the left, despite the vehement protests and interventions from the floor which may be expected from many sincerely socialist local delegates, will at the best be muffled, distorted and confused—at the very moment when the battle of policy is the crux of the crisis of the Labour Party.

Heads in the Sand

Is there a crisis of the Labour Party? Is there a crisis of Labour policy? Not, if we are to believe Dr. Pangloss Shinwell. 'There really is nothing wrong with Labour's policy; all we need is the power to apply it' (contribution to the discussion in the *Star,* June 21). Did Labour drop one and a half million votes in the election? Mr. Morgan Phillips has the answer pat: 'Why did Labour lose the

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election? Because we failed to poll our full vote' (*Sunday Pictorial*, May 29). In other words, we got less votes because we got less votes. Impeccable logic. But why did former Labour voters fail to vote Labour this time? Because, in the face of high-power Tory organisation, 'Labour has had to rely upon the enthusiasm of voluntary workers. This system can be more effective, as 1945 showed'. So the 'enthusiasm' of Labour volunteers could beat Toryism in 1945, but dried up in 1955. Why did the enthusiasm dry up in 1955? Could it be a question of policy? At this point the discussion is closed with an admonitory warning against 'internal quarrels', *i.e.*, divisions on policy.

Organisation and Policy

The President of the Foundry Workers, a prominent Labour Party member and several times a Labour parliamentary candidate, suggests that the election defeat was due to 'the close similarity of Labour's Right Wing to Tory policy'. Mr. Gaitskell has the answer pat 'There really is no basis for saying that the policy differences between the Parties were any greater in 1951 and 1950' (*Socialist Commentary*, July, 1955). So there was a visible difference in 1945, and Labour won; there was no visible difference in 1950, 1951, and 1955, and Labour went steadily down, first to the crumbling of its majority, then to a small Tory majority, then to a considerable Tory majority. Conclusion of Mr. Gaitskell: similarity to Tory policy makes no difference to the result. And so on without end. The 'election inquest' by the leadership is worthy of Mr. Justice Shallow. From all this the grand conclusion follows. There is nothing wrong with the policy, except the need to relegate the obsolete notions of socialism a little further into the realm of ethical platitudes, and adapt the practical politics a little closer to the requirements of modern capitalism. The real need is organisation. More paid agents. More finance. More streamlined propaganda. And all will be well. The good old swing of the pendulum will work again. Perhaps an economic blizzard will help. Such is the panacea offered by the dominant leadership of the Labour Party for present discontents. No wonder the hungry sheep look up and do not feel fed.

Facing the Facts

It is time to face the facts a little more seriously. Over the four elections since the war Labour has moved consistently downwards since 1945. The record majority of 1945, when the high peak of

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war-time mass anti-fascist and socialist enthusiasm, inspired above all by the example of the Soviet Union in the war, swept the leaders of Transport House into office, gave place, after five years of Labour Government, not to the consolidation of the ground won for new advance, but to the wrecking of that majority and its replacement by a tiny majority in 1950, which in turn gave place to a small Tory majority in 1951, which in turn gave place, after three years of Tory Government, to a more than threefold enlarged Tory majority in 1955. Such a record of continuous decline over four elections is not easily paralleled in the normal functioning of the two-party system. The absolute fall in the Labour vote in 1955, by one and a half million, has only one parallel in all the 37 years of advance since 1918; and that was the ominous year, 1931, when the principal Labour Party leaders openly went over to Toryism.

Dwindling Effective

Individual membership—the measure of effective mobilised support for electoral work and campaigning—has fallen during the past year by 71,028 or 7 per cent., so that the Labour Party total of individual members has fallen below one million, at a time when the Tory Party claims three million individual members. Things have come to a pretty pass when the Conservative Party, whose constituency organisations were once the narrow preserve of the retired colonels, the parsons and the squires and the estate agents, can now pose as the broadest mass party in the country, while the Labour Party's mass basis (for it is the individual membership that is the real measure of operational membership) is only one-third the size of that of the Conservative Party and dwindles. Still more serious is the situation among the young people, to whom the Conservative Party has especially directed its appeal during the past decade. The Labour League of Youth, ceaselessly harassed and discouraged by a headquarters more afraid of the unorthodoxy of youth than of dwindling numbers, has fallen from 670 branches in 1952 to 237 branches this year.

Signs of the 'Times'

The Times is no friend of Labour. But it is a firm friend of right-wing Labour in its battle against working class militancy. For many years *The Times* has warned against the potential menace of advancing Labour if some day its leadership and policy should shift from the present safe channels. A new note has now, however, appeared when *The Times* has begun to warn against the menace of the 'decline' of Labour. The most 'shocking' fact of the

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election in the eyes of this august organ of the City and Whitehall was the fall in the Labour vote:

> The shocking fact about the election was the steep fall in the Labour vote for the first time in a quarter of a century. . . . The historic question is whether the Labour Party is going into decline or whether the pendulum has simply swung temporarily against it. In 1950 and 1951 the pendulum moved only minutely for two reasons: one was the stout loyalty of the Labour faithful on polling day and the other was 'distrust of the Tories'. This time the loyalty faltered. (June 4.)

And again in an editorial entitled 'In Decline?' (September 13):

> The picture is of an aging party divided within itself, lacking vigour at the top and zeal at the bottom, inadequately organised and inadequately financed, unable to attract the young men and women who might rejuvenate it. . . . No one who has studied the agenda can doubt that many members are aware the party is now in need of revival. It is undoubtedly equally true that few of them know how it can be brought about.

The conclusion reveals the genuine basis of alarm:

> The next year or so will either see the turning point or a more rapid and disastrous decline which would leave the British political scene in a state of difficult and dangerous transition.

When *The Times* finds the 'decline' of the Labour Party 'unwelcome', this is indeed a sign of the Times. For this anxiety of the ruling class organ for the prosperity of the Labour Party does assuredly not spring from love of socialism.

After the Election

What has the Labour Party done since the election to retrieve the defeat or revive the fighting spirit of their followers against the Tory Government? Has the leadership presented any intelligible alternative policy either inside parliament or in the country? On the contrary. Never has there been such an eloquence of negation and sterility. If the election of May revealed a record low in passive docility to Toryism on every major issue dividing public opinion (the hydrogen bomb, Nazi rearmament, colonial wars, or strikes and the fight for higher wages), the record of these four months since the election has sunk even lower. In the name of 'unity' the incipient battles on policy which preceded the election have been placed in cold storage, not because the issues have been resolved, but because they have been evaded. The so-called 'rebel' groups have become, for the time at any rate, 'good boys'. Mr. Wilson has joined the ranks of the 'statesmen'. Mr. Bevan has rejoined the Front Bench. Mr. Crossman has explained to bewildered followers why there is no fight in parliament (*Sunday Pictorial*, July 10):

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'Five weeks since the election and still no real challenge to the Government. What is the Opposition playing at?'

I can understand why Labour supporters are impatiently asking this question. They want to see Socialist enthusiasm in the constituencies revived by a resounding clash at Westminster.

But at present there is scarcely a tinkle of conflict there.

The trouble is that in British politics it takes two to make a quarrel. And the Eden Government refuses to oblige.

'It takes two to make a quarrel.' So there is nothing to quarrel with in the policy of the Tory Government. Why, then, have a Labour Party? 'If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?'

Betrayal of Peace

The situation is in fact more serious. For these same months have seen the greatest events in the international situation since the war—the first approach to negotiation of the powers in order to end the cold war and replace the policy of strength by the policy of peaceful co-existence. The issue is still in the balance. Every word and every deed counts at this critical moment. What has been the role of the Labour Party leadership? As late as February of this year the right wing leadership was still securing the rejection in the parliamentary labour party, by 93 votes to 70, of a proposal that Labour should present a resolution for four-power top-level talks. On the eve of Geneva the Labour Party leaders took the principal part in holding in London the Fourth Congress of the 'Socialist International', whose main proceedings consisted of a series of diatribes by emigrés from Eastern Europe against the Soviet Union and People's Democracies. During Geneva the Labour Party Executive came out with a loudly proclaimed statement of policy—on the necessity to prepare for a hydrogen bomb war, and chiding the Tory Government for inadequate attention to this essential task. The official organ, the *Daily Herald,* distinguished itself by publishing day by day the blackest, most hostile and negative reports about Geneva, prophesying until the very last day deadlock and fiasco. After the success of Geneva the frigidity of every reference by the Labour right wing leadership to the outcome and to the new hopes of mankind has been accompanied by ceaseless warnings against illusions about peaceful co-existence. Typical and revealing was the Presidential Address at Southport, when Mr. Geddes warned that 'we must not allow the heady wines of goodwill to cloud our judgment' and proceeded to explain that an end of the cold war would make it more difficult for the right wing to pursue the cold war within the labour movement.

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Labour and the Economic Situation

What of the situation at home? The worsening economic position occupies the thoughts of all. The British Employers' Confederation is out on the offensive, with its first public manifesto since 1931, calling for a halt to wage advances and for increased unemployment. Seven million workers have put in their demands for wage advances. Where does the Labour Party stand? On the side of the workers' battle? There is no answer. Certainly the parliamentary leaders do not miss the opportunity to present the conventional gibes at the Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer who has had to pass, like Labour Chancellors of the Exchequer before him, from flowery talk of prosperity to alarm calls about the menacing economic situation and the need to reduce home consumption. Plenty of opportunities for the customary parliamentary cross-talk. But what is the positive alternative policy of the Labour Party to meet the present economic situation? Mr. Gaitskell pointed out in parliament on June 16 that holders of ordinary shares had gained £3,000 million in the value of their shares over the preceding 15 months. 'Shame!' called out a Labour M.P. 'I am not saying that it is a shame,' retorted Mr. Gaitskell. Does the Labour Party support the demands for wage increases by seven million workers? Or does the Labour Party stand for wage restraint? Does the Labour Party support the Government's demand that home consumption must be reduced in order to pay for the colossal arms programme and overseas military expenditure? Has the Labour Party put forward any proposals to strike at the causes of inflation by cutting drastically the monstrous expenditure of the arms programme or ending the colonial wars and the drain of overseas military expenditure? Mr. Gaitskell is the Labour Party's economic expert. But it would take a super-expert to disentangle from his speeches what concrete alternative economic policy he proposes to Mr. Butler's policy save in respect of the variant technical methods to achieve the same basic objective of cutting home consumption in order to pay for the war programme.

'Peace, Retrenchment, Reform?'

It has long been remarked that the Labour Party, which was originally intended by its founders as an alliance of all working class and socialist organisations to break the domination of the old two-party system of the Conservatives and the Liberals, and open the way for independent working class politics and the advance to socialism, has in practice itself become absorbed into the old

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two-party system of British capitalist politics, and turned into a successor of the Liberal Party, holding the allegiance of the mass of organised workers, as the Liberal Party once did, but on the top level operating in close co-operation with the Conservative Party and alternating with it in the administration of capitalism and imperialism. That general analysis is true and governs the problem of the present stage of working class politics. But the old Liberal Party, while agreeing with the Conservatives on fundamentals, used to conduct stormy mass campaigns throughout the country on specific issues capable of arousing the heated emotions of the workers. When the top leadership evolved to imperialism, the angry revolt of the radical rank and file shook the party and prepared the way for its downfall. The old Liberal Party used to have a motto: 'Peace, Retrenchment, Reform.' Where is that banner today?

Wanted : An Opposition

For Peace the present Labour Party leadership have substituted the Hydrogen Bomb, the Atlantic Pact, the Cold War and Nazi rearmament and colonial wars. For Retrenchment they have substituted a Rearmament Programme, which, with the interest on the swollen State Debt, absorbs half the budget. As for Reform, they have long ago abandoned democratic reform (abolition of the House of Lords, or proportional representation, or separation of Church and State), and they have now announced that social reform has already gone so far that not only have class divisions disappeared, but the resulting prosperity of the workers is making them vote Tory (see the analyses of Mr. Gaitskell and Mr. Morrison on the causes of the election defeat). Many local delegates would like to see the Labour Party stand for Socialism. Let us begin with a more modest immediate aim. Let the Labour Party become an Opposition to the Tory Government—not just 'Her Majesty's Opposition' in the parliamentary stage-play, but a real Opposition seeking to rouse the country and unite all working class, democratic and progressive elements in a common fight to force a new election and a change of Government.

Towards a Democratic Programme

If the battle of the left elements in the Labour Party could even win the way forward to the adoption of a progressive democratic programme: for peace, that is, the ending of support of the cold war and the freeing of Britain from the shackles of the American

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military alliance; for the ending of the colonial wars and colonial repression; for the banning of nuclear weapons and the drastic reduction of the rearmament programme; for East-West trade; for an aggressive economic programme against monopoly capital; for the democratic reorganisation of the nationalised industries and revision of their financial basis, so as to make them the spearhead for economic advance in place of the milch-cow of the private sector, and for the extension of nationalisation on this basis; for the raising of living standards and the support of the wage-struggles of the workers: this could be the beginning of a real change, the first step to a revival of the Labour Party, and bring back life and the sense of battle to British politics.

Labour Party and Socialism

And Socialism? There is no doubt, as a study of the agenda of the Margate Labour Party Conference reveals, that many constituency labour parties, in common with progressive delegates from the trade unions, earnestly desire a change from the present policy of veiled alliance with Toryism to a policy for socialism. There are 52 resolutions on policy on the agenda, 50 of which are from local parties. The main body of these demand a more 'vigorous' or 'dynamic' or 'full-blooded' or 'fighting' or 'virile' or 'militant' or 'pure' or 'positive' socialist policy. Some want a policy that conforms to 'the ideas and ideals of the pioneers of the movement' or a 'return to basic socialist principles' or 'genuinely socialist principles'. Morecambe and Lonsdale believe that 'Labour reformism has reached the end of its usefulness' and that 'full employment and a decent funeral are not enough'. All this is a splendid expression of the feelings and desires of the active rank and file. Good luck to their fight at the conference, so far as their fight succeeds in making its way through the conditions of the agenda. But the time has come when it is necessary to discuss a little further with these sincere socialists in the Labour Party the conditions for the fulfilment of their aims.

Beyond Illusions to Reality

The fight for socialism is going to require more than the submission of a resolution for socialism to a Labour Party Conference. It is obvious that, with the present character and structure of the Labour Party, with the present Labour Party Executive, with the present Parliamentary Labour Party leadership and composition, with the present throttling of every left expression and initiative, with

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the present central machine holding the local rank and file in a straitjacket, the passing of a resolution in favour of socialism at a Labour Party conference will not alone and thereby turn the Labour Party into a party capable of achieving socialism. The fight for socialism, if it is to be seriously undertaken, will require a radical transformation of the political labour movement.

The Communist Party and the Left

It will require the mobilisation of the united strength of the organised working class, and of its allies among the widest sections of the people, operating equally in the parliamentary and electoral field, and in the industrial field and every sphere of national life, under a united socialist leadership with a socialist policy, to conquer and end monopoly capitalism and build socialism. Such a transformation of the political labour movement, and such a mobilisation of the working class for socialism, is not impossible, as the fainthearts among the left have begun to believe. It is possible, and it will come. But it is only possible, and it will only be achieved, when the political party of the conscious socialist workers representing the fight for socialism, rooted in industry and in the mass organisations of the workers and in the daily mass struggle, that is, a strong Communist Party, is able to carry forward the mass organisations of the working class, break the grip of the right wing leadership, and lead the majority of the organised working class and the people to the victory of socialism. There is no other way. All history has proved and is daily proving this.

Recommended Reading for the Left in the Labour Party

If any left socialist in the Labour Party, in this year 1955, after half a century of experience, still believes that the present Labour Party, as at present constituted, can achieve socialism, and has not yet come to recognise the indispensable role of the Communist Party to carry through the necessary transformation of the political labour movement in order to win the victory of socialism, such a left socialist in the Labour Party—we say it with all respect for his desires and intentions—is living in dreamland. And if any left socialist in the Labour Party doubts this, let him read, mark and inwardly digest a recent study which has appeared on 'British Political Parties',* and which has received wide attention for its

*British Political Parties: The Distribution of Power within the Conservative and Labour Parties, by R. T. McKenzie. Heinemann, 1955. 30s.

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careful and documented survey of the evolution of the Conservative and Labour Parties over the past fifty-five years. The book is important, not for the political conclusions of the author, who is far from understanding the full significance of the rich material he analyses, but because the real questions raised by this analysis, despite its one-sided character, go to the heart of the present problems and crisis of the Labour Party. To these questions, which are cardinal for the future of the British labour movement and of British politics, it will be necessary to return next month. For whatever Margate achieves, it may be stated with confidence that Margate will not yet solve the crisis of the Labour Party; and the burning questions requiring solution will still be with us.

September 18, 1955. R.P.D.

T. A. JACKSON

(August 21, 1879—August 18, 1955)

The Editorial Board of Labour Monthly *pays heartfelt tribute to the memory of T. A. Jackson, Communist agitator, printer, journalist, critic and lecturer, with over half a century of inimitable record of service to the working class movement and to the cause of human liberation. He was the author of 'Charles Dickens: the Progress of a Radical', 'Trials of British Freedom', 'Dialectics: the Logic of Marxism', 'Ireland Her Own' and many other books and pamphlets in which his wit and incisive style delighted great numbers of readers. To this magazine he was a frequent contributor for over a quarter of a century: and while older readers will remember his 'Essays in Censorship' directed against the Home Secretary in early 1929, all will recall with pleasure his penetrating commemorative article two years ago on 'François Rabelais'.*

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BEHIND THE POTTED PLANTS AT SOUTHPORT

JOHN HORNER

THEY sat behind their row of pot plants in the full flood of the television lights, and from the silver-haired chairman to the visiting American delegates with their smartly dressed ladies, the Platform appeared visibly to shudder. Was it Joe Scott in the rostrum, with his pawky, cockney humour? or the clear, incisive Arthur Horner? Perhaps it was Frank Haxell, methodically stripping to shreds the arguments of the General Council's back room boys? But the rostrum was empty. It was no less than the chain-hung Mayor, an old warrior of the movement, giving his civic welcome. And he was recalling the days when Harry Pollitt attended Congress as a delegate! It was Harry Pollitt, he said, who had introduced the words 'proletariat' and 'bourgeois' into Conference debates. Although the Platform shuddered, the burst of applause demonstrated that delegates welcomed this reminder of the class basis of society.

But no such 'old fashioned' terms appeared in the presidential address of Mr. Geddes. 'It was trade unionists who returned the Tory Party to power'. . . . 'The workers are apparently determined to learn the hard way'. . . . 'Their enjoyment of the present has obscured their political judgment'. . . . 'Was it just "boss talk" to suggest that wage demands are threatening our economic structure?' This vital question, he said, ought to be inquired into by T.U.C. experts. Then the workers could really determine the measure of their own responsibility. 'Once we have ascertained and,' he added, 'shouldered our responsibilities, we can all the more firmly place the responsibilities of the Government and of the employers on their shoulders'. In daring words, Mr. Geddes declared 'Despite our long experience of arbitration in this country it is by no means certain that it is so efficient, so effective, that strikes can no longer be justified'. Perhaps this was Mr. Geddes' enjoyment of the present obscuring his political judgment.

He has a reputation as a calm, precise, judicial man. Certainly his address was a model of moderation. Moderate in everything, he warned Congress about getting too enthusiastic over Geneva. 'Geneva must be welcomed with warm hearts, but,' he added, 'by cool heads as well'. (He had obviously forgotten Lloyd George's

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deadly retort to Neville Chamberlain: *'Fish have cool heads'*.) One almost heard a note of nostalgia in his voice for the iciest days of the Cold War when he said: 'Communism might dominate more easily in an atmosphere of goodwill than in an atmosphere of hate'. But if the Geneva spirit was absent from the presidential address, there was plenty of it amongst the delegates. Unanimously the Congress instructed the General Council to call upon trade unions in every country to urge their Governments to ban the H-bomb and atomic weapons and to stop all tests immediately. Unanimously Congress resolved that China should forthwith be brought into the United Nations. Delegates urged the continuance of Four Power talks. Unanimously they accepted a resolution on cutting the Call-up. The strongest feelings were raised on racial discrimination at home and abroad as resolution after resolution was unanimously passed. Congress called for the full development of the resources of Colonial countries to remove the unbalanced economies which have resulted from long years of imperialist exploitation. Despite all that has happened, despite all the trickery, nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ million votes were cast against German rearmament. And getting on for 300 delegates including five General Secretaries, and members of the General Council, signed a telegram to Eisenhower demanding a passport for Paul Robeson.

It is true that Britain's economic situation and the fight for wages loomed largest in Congress debates. But at the same time the majority of delegates were concerned that in its own way Southport should help Geneva.

With the rail and dock strikes fresh in their minds, delegates carefully examined the General Council's proposal to claim powers to intervene in negotiations *before* a breakdown occurs. To the uninitiated, opposition to such a proposal might seem strange. Sir Vincent Tewson protested that the General Council only wanted to help. Mr. Bryn Roberts, for once on the side of the General Council, told his 'left wing friends' that they should 'look at the powers of the General Councils of the Russian and Chinese trade unions'. But, as one of his 'left wing friends' shouted back: 'They have different General Councils!' Opposing the idea, it was Mr. Frank Foulkes who disclosed that if the Electrical Trades Union had accepted the advice of the General Council during the newspaper strike, nothing like the final increases would have been won by newspaper workers: 'and that', said Mr. Foulkes, nodding to the press table, 'includes the journalists who attacked us during the strike'. He recalled that when the present power to intervene was

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given to the General Council over 30 years ago, it was among other things, to enable the leadership of Congress to rally the movement in support of any Union in dispute with their employers. (When was it last so used?) He questioned the motives underlying the present desire for the increased power to intervene. Almost every subsequent speaker demonstrated the deep misgivings among large sections of Congress that the present General Council was not one in which such powers should be vested. In reply, Sir Vincent could only repeat, 'Trust us'. No-one wanted to remove or to limit or to impair the rights of any trade union to take strike action. Only trust the General Council! Over 3 million votes cast against him showed the limited measure of that trust. But the problem of a unifying leadership for the movement facing a growing economic crisis, with its pending battles, remains unresolved. The real problem goes far deeper than the limitation of the powers of the present type of General Council.

This year Congress witnessed few scenes. The noisiest session took place over the resolution moved by Mr. J. Jarvie of the Blacksmiths, for the 40-hour week and against consistent overtime. He showed how conditions are being eroded by the constant encroachment of overtime. The early claims of the movement for the shorter working week appear to have been abandoned. The General Council wanted the resolution remitted. We were enjoying full employment, they said. More and more workers were required. Mr. Jarvie replied that if we want more workers, cut the Call-up and get the boys home. The Miners voted against. Their delegation, the largest in Congress, immediately became the scene of the most violent wordy battles. Men were standing up, shouting, declaring that the Miners were *not* in opposition: that their voting card had been wrongly cast. One engineering delegate, sitting on the other side of the aisle, a little unkindly, referred to the debate on automation: 'This', he said, 'is another example. The General Council presses the button, and up goes the Miners' card'. What this rowdy scene did demonstrate was that the large block votes cast on behalf of the General Council by no means represent the solid support of the rank-and-file of the particular Unions.

That rank-and-file is determined to beat off the Tory Government and the employers' attacks on their living standards. They want more pay. At the moment up to seven million of them. So the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers' amendment to the E.T.U.'s forthright, blunt declaration that Congress should support

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every and any Union in its wage fight, had to be very carefully worded. It conceded opposition to 'arbitrary wage restraint'. Mr. Frank Haxell of the E.T.U. showed that despite the increase in production, with rising profits and with the lengthening of the working week, wages had barely kept step with prices. In the face of his incontestable arguments, the General Council paid lip service to support for wage increases.

In glorious summer weather, Congress was meeting in a darkened cinema. Towards the end of every session there were many vacant seats as delegates were compelled to seek light and fresh air. But there was hardly an empty seat when Mr. Arthur Horner opened the debate on international trade union unity. He declared that he could not admit the existence of a perpetually divided world, that the motion was strictly in accord with Congress principles. It was a brilliant exposition of the present-day need of international solidarity, and when he sat down he received the loudest applause of the week. But then came U.S.D.A.W.'s Mr. W. Padley, who poured scorn on the resolution, saying that if Congress had to approach the World Federation of Trade Unions, disaster would follow. In a vitriolic speech, he denied that there could be unity with workers in Communist countries. It was a rank-and-file shop steward, at his first Congress, who declared that he was shocked to find that there were leaders of trade unions who were not prepared to have contacts with nations of the socialist world. Sir Vincent turned the whole debate from a general discussion on the need for international trade union solidarity, a level on which Arthur Horner had placed it, to one of relationships with the W.F.T.U. He demanded its rejection 'in no uncertain voice'. When he made his reply Mr. Horner received even greater applause. He first dealt with Mr. Padley 'the ultra left, travelling full circle, and becoming the ultra right'. He dealt with Tewson's allegations that he was speaking with two voices. As he declared 'I am what I have always been—a revolutionary standing for a change in capitalist society, and nothing in the world can alter that until I pass on'. Veteran Congress delegates gave him an ovation. And despite Sir Vincent's invitation, they did not reject the resolution 'in no uncertain voice'. Nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ million votes were cast for it, the General Council obtaining $4\frac{1}{2}$ million. And so strong was the mounting feeling for world unity that when two excellent speeches had been made on the resolution to revive the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee, the General Council neatly side-stepped the issue by arranging a motion of 'previous question'.

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But the struggle for international unity will go on. Mr. Padley said that during the period of the united W.F.T.U., acrimony between Russia and the West had been more bitter than at any time since the October revolution. Then by astonishing logic, he argued that the breakup of the W.F.T.U. had helped to relax tension. The simple fact is that when the late Arthur Deakin finally walked out of the Council chamber of the W.F.T.U. he was deliberately acting a part in the Cold War. History will show that those who seek to keep the Unions of the world forever divided, are doing the greatest disservice to the British people.

Despite the many progressive decisions at Southport, there were certain vital questions which Congress evaded; not least of which were:—how to tackle the growing rivalries between certain Unions, how to recruit the millions of unorganised men and women. For their part, the General Council showed themselves as willing to work with the Tory Government as closely as ever they did with a Labour Government. That there was a Tory Government was the fault of the workers. In this they echoed what had been said at the Conference of Executives preceding Congress, called by the Labour Party. 'The workers must learn the hard way' had sneered Mr. Geddes. 'It was the working people who put the Tories in', said Mr. Gaitskell. 'How could Labour be expected to win if the working people did not vote?'

It was the delegate from the Boilermakers, mentioned by the Mayor in his speech of welcome, who reported Congress 30 years ago for *Labour Monthly*. In that article Harry Pollitt quoted the address of the then General Council Chairman:

> This movement of ours has learned some lessons, and one is that a militant and progressive policy consistently and steadily pursued, is the only policy which will unite, consolidate and inspire our rank and file.

Mr. Geddes and Mr. Gaitskell might, with some profit, read that speech of their predecessor.

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TURNING POINT FOR PEACE

GORDON SCHAFFER

THE people celebrate their rejection of the cold war and their hopes for creative co-existence. Football and athletic teams meet in Moscow. Mr. Malik switches on the lights at Blackpool. Scientists at Geneva swop atomic data, which would have given M.I.5 and F.B.I. the opportunity for unprecedented witch-hunts a few months ago. Delegates at the Trades Union Congress demand the first fruits of co-existence in the form of a cut in the call-up. They frighten the cold warriors on the platform at Southport, by giving more than three million votes to a motion urging a return to the traditions of international trade union solidarity.

The people have taken over the spirit of Geneva and left their leaders panting behind. Some of the leaders, and even more the back-room boys of the cold war try desperately to call a halt. For one thing has become absolutely clear in these months of hope since the meeting at the 'Summit'—either we go forward in the spirit of Geneva to genuine disarmament, to honest discussion on European security, to the admission of China to the United Nations, and the repudiation of those who still plan war in Asia, or we return to the tensions and the perils of cold war. But going back to the cold war is a difficult operation. The hatreds built up over the years have vanished, and it is no longer possible to put the responsibility for every breakdown on the Russians. The people can no longer be put off with stories about Molotov saying 'No'. They demand results.

The discussions in the sub-committee of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in New York crystallise the dilemma. The Soviet Union produces proposals which take over almost in their entirety, plans previously put forward by the Western Powers. She accepts stage by stage reductions in armaments, and agrees to postpone the prohibition of atomic weapons until the second stage of the plan when armed forces and conventional weapons have been cut by 75 per cent. of the agreed reductions. The Soviet plan puts forward practical proposals for an international control agency with observation posts in all countries charged with the duty of reporting on any dangerous concentration of forces—concentrations which even in the atomic age would be a prelude to aggression. She asks

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only that during the interim period, the powers agree to prohibit the use of the atom bomb except on the decision of the Security Council. And the plea from the East is backed by practical example. The Soviet Union cuts her armed forces by 640,000 men, and her allies in Europe follow her example.

Within the Soviet plan there is plenty of room for negotiation and for accommodation of different view-points in the West, but no one can be in any doubt that agreement somewhere along these lines must change the whole international picture, and take the powers further along the road to co-existence and peace. There is no longer any possibility of deception. Disarmament along lines proclaimed by Western leaders and accepted by the Soviet Union, must mean the abandonment of strategies based on atomic weapons —strategies that have been proclaimed by the leaders of N.A.T.O., S.E.A.T.O., and the other U.S.-dominated military blocs as the basis of Western policy. Precisely when this situation becomes clear, the Western representatives at the New York sub-committee, including Britain's Mr. Nutting, stall on their own previous proposals for agreed reductions in armed forces, and United States Secretary for Air, Mr. Donald Quarles, repudiates any suggestion that America will agree to abolish atomic weapons, or accept a system of international inspection.

Simultaneously, President Eisenhower, who broke away from Mr. Dulles at Geneva, repeats his talk about 'liberation of the satellites', and 'unity of Germany in freedom', which is modern jargon for the restoration of capitalism in the People's Democracies, and a Germany led by Nazi generals threatening Poland across the Oder-Neisse line. A spokesman for Chiang Kai-shek announces that Chinese Nationalists are ready to invade the Chinese mainland. Syngman Rhee receives vast new supplies of arms, and threatens to re-start the Korean war. This is back where we started. If these are the last words of the West, there can be no progress at the coming meeting of the Foreign Ministers. But there are other forces moving into action besides the generals, the cold war politicians, and the gentlemen from the A.F. of L. and the I.C.F.T.U. who came to Southport to try to rekindle hatreds where friendship is growing.

The whole fabric of the cold war alliance is falling apart. The supporters of the U.S.A. announced policy of 'Let Asians fight Asians' are reduced to a handful among the twelve hundred millions of Asia, who have found a new unity based on co-existence. The

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revolt against colonial oppression in French North Africa, Malaya and Kenya grows fiercer, as it must do in a world where India, Pakistan, Indonesia and other former subject peoples have set out on the path to freedom. A Middle East strategy based on Cyprus as a military headquarters, and on a Turkey linked to N.A.T.O. in the West, to Pakistan in the East, to Greece and Yugoslavia in Europe, and to Iraq in the Middle East collapses with the demand of the people of Cyprus for freedom and the new friendship between Yugoslavia and her socialist neighbours.

Above all, the people are in action. The talks at Geneva were willed not by the politicians but by the people. The people have seen the promise of creative peace, a peace which will lift from their lives the intolerable burden of armaments, and harness the limitless possibilities of science to the well-being of a world that belongs to us all. The people who have broken away from the shackles of cold war, and who understand that the choice now is between genuine peace and a war that will destroy mankind will not allow the brave hopes of Geneva to be destroyed.

A NEW FORCE FOR PEACE

SOONG CHING LING

[*On the occasion of the Sixth Anniversary of the foundation of the People's Republic of China, we print (through the courtesy of* China Reconstructs) *this abridgement of a forthcoming article by Soong Ching Ling (Mme. Sun Yat-sen), Chairman of the Peace Liaison Committee of the Asian and Pacific Regions.—Ed., L.M.*]

The old Asia is no more. The new Asia has arisen.

Arising from circumstances brought about by the character and results of World War II, a considerable group of newly-independent countries has emerged in Asia. The conditions under which they won their freedom, and the methods by which it was achieved, were different in many cases. Yet there was a factor common to all: the protracted and unremitting struggle of the peoples against the foreign oppressors of their lands. This had revived on a new foundation, despite all obstacles, the ties that had bound these countries together from remote antiquity. Since winning independ-

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ence, basing themselves on this priceless heritage, they have forged fresh links—born of the similarity of the problems they face in safeguarding their hard-won freedom, and of their peoples' efforts to throw off the blight of poverty and ignorance.

Having so much in common in their past and present, these nations find themselves of one mind on many vital issues as they take their place in regional and world affairs today. In expressing their own needs and aspirations, they invariably reflect those of the whole of resurgent Asia. This similarity of viewpoint, it is already apparent, is a new force which has come out of the East to influence the affairs of the entire world. Founded on the struggle for the right of self-determination by each people, it asserts the inseparable connection of this goal with the achievement of world peace. With the interweaving of these two struggles, history has entered on a new course.

The renowned Five Principles, or *Panch Shila* as they have come to be known in India, are the highest embodiment of this new force for peace. They are: Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; Non-aggression; Non-interference in each other's internal affairs; Equality and mutual benefit; Peaceful co-existence.

It was the idea of the Five Principles that formed the basis for the restoration of peace in Indo-China, through agreements reached at Geneva in 1954. This settlement stipulated respect for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the three states involved, and non-interference in their internal affairs. That the fuse spluttering in Indo-China did not set off a world-wide explosion was due in large measure to the positive contributions of Asian states, mainly the Colombo powers and China. Clearly, the Geneva settlement was reached in the spirit of the Five Principles and it is in this spirit that it is meant to be carried out.

India, Burma and Indonesia, three countries which subscribed to the Five Principles, joined with two other Asian states, Pakistan and Ceylon, to call the historic Asian-African Conference. Everyone feels now that this gathering has had world-wide influence. The Bandung Declaration on the Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation included ten principles which were an extension and development of the original five. It gave further evidence that the concept of peaceful co-existence, in the minds of the vast populations of Asia and Africa, is directly linked with their own national demands. The Five Principles, and the results reached in Asia by their application, had their deep effect in helping to bring about the

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On the Sixth Anniversary o

READING THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION

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? Chinese People's Republic

By Chu Ming-Kang

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long-awaited meeting of the heads of governments of the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain and France at Geneva last July. One cannot separate from them the fact that the ambassadors of the United States and China sat down, in August, at the same table to discuss immediate outstanding problems.

Never in the modern era have the nations of Asia stood so firmly on their own feet as they do now, defending their own rights and at the same time showing how tolerance and wisdom may be exercised in foreign affairs. Asia has broken with the past, entered an entirely new phase of historical development, and in so doing helped the whole world in the solution of its problems. Gone forever are the times when Asian peoples had to tolerate dictation from the outside. Asia is no longer an echo in foreign policy, in deciding which way the world, of which it is so large a part, shall travel. Asia has ideas of her own. They harmonise with those of others who seek peace, justice and co-operation among peoples. They are directly opposed to those of any government that seeks domination over the rest, that sees peoples and regions as war material for its own ends.

This harmony and this opposition are not fortuitous. They spring from life itself. They are a manifestation of the great positive fact of our Twentieth Century, the standing up of the peoples against oppression wherever and in whatever guise it appears.

It was in the process of the struggle to drive imperialist oppression from their soil and open the path to progress for their peoples that China, India, Burma and other Asian nations revived old links and forged the new ones from which the Five Principles sprang. Our friendship, maturing today, was born in that fiery crucible. Needing peace, knowing that peace coincides with the desires of the majority of mankind, our Asian nations have found how to use their own extensive areas of agreement to generate a new force for world tranquillity. This has helped to create the climate for further relaxation of international tensions. We are proud that we have played our part in easing the hearts of the peoples.

My own country, China, will continue to seek good relations in this spirit with all nations, East and West. By word and deed, we will strive for the building of mutual confidence and for a relaxed world atmosphere. We will continue to act as the peoples of the world wish, and as the times demand. We will work for peace on earth, for the enjoyment by all peoples of the fruits of their labour and the joy of life.

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TRADE BANS BOOMERANG

Commander EDGAR P. YOUNG, R.N., Retired

IF, after the end of the Second World War, the countries of eastern Europe, headed by the U.S.S.R., had got together and imposed an embargo on the import from the U.S.A., Britain, France, and other industrialised countries of the capitalist West, of a long list of goods—including, notably, ships and engineering products—which those countries earn their living by exporting; and, if under cover of such 'protectionism', they had expanded and developed their own productive capacity to such a degree as to be able very largely to satisfy their own and each other's requirements of such goods, there would surely have been loud protest all over the Western world—from manufacturers and exporters, in the first place, at the consequent loss of their profits, but eventually also from the workers, as it led to their unemployment. This protest would have been intensified, if, following on that hypothetical embargo, the Chinese People's Republic had decided to meet most, if not all, of its requirements of such goods as have been mentioned out of the surplus production of eastern Europe and had refused to buy these goods from Western countries which are in a position to supply them, as they have done in the past.

At the Leipzig Trade Fair this spring, it was patent that the situation just envisaged has, in fact, materialised. It is the result, however, not of 'protectionism' in eastern Europe, or of 'unfair discrimination' by the Chinese People's Republic, but of the trade policy *deliberately* pursued by the Government of the United States in the first place, and of the acceptance, and even, in some cases, the extension, of that policy by the Governments of Britain, France, etc., in the second. With the possible exception of gas turbines, there are few items on the Western 'embargo' list—and indeed few goods at all—which the People's Democracies individually or collectively cannot produce, and are not, in fact, now producing. It is quite obvious, therefore, that nothing but harm can result from further pursuit of a policy which is self-defeating, as will be further brought out, I think, by the following examples.

Let us consider, first, Czechoslovakia, because, from an economic point of view, she is very much a miniature of Britain: an industrialised country, which must import a large part of its foodstuffs and of its industrial raw materials, and must export manufactured goods on a large scale to pay for these. She might have enjoyed some years of ephemeral prosperity, as Britain did, by exploiting

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the post-war sellers' market for her textiles and other consumer goods. Her government had the sense to see, however, that 'prosperity' on such a basis could not last in a post-war world where her former customers for consumer goods were evidently going, more and more, to produce these for themselves. She had the good business sense, therefore, to study the world market, to consider what the world would want most to import and what it would be most profitable for her to export, and to make plans for a vast expansion of her engineering industry—and of her iron and steel industry, *so that she might be as independent as possible of foreign sources of supply of her most vital raw materials.*

As the result of this, Czechoslovakia was 'in the market' at Leipzig with all kinds of engineering products, including some of the finest machine-tools in the world and whole industrial plants, such as are urgently in demand in all the under-developed countries. She can supply these moreover, on a relatively large scale and without much delay, because her engineering industry is not handicapped by shortage of labour and material, or by having to give priority to the production of war materials.

What is noteworthy, however, and is, perhaps, insufficiently appreciated in the West, is the fact that *because* Western trade policy, as mentioned earlier in this article, protected the Czechoslovak engineering industry against Western competition during the difficult period of its post-war reorganisation and expansion, and because it ensured—and is still ensuring—it a favoured position in the vast market represented by the hundreds of millions of people hungry for its products who live east of the so-called 'iron curtain', that industry has been able so to tool itself and to adopt such large-scale production techniques as to be able now to offer its products at competitive prices *to the West!* Such competitive power—and it is not unique in eastern Europe—is made more effective by the fact that it is accompanied by a trading policy based on the principles of 'equality and mutual advantage', and to which no political, or other, 'strings' are attached, a factor which must clearly carry much weight with under-developed countries such as were at Bandung.

My second example, revealing the situation from the opposite angle, relates to Bulgaria. Before the last war, this very small country, with a population of the order of eight millions, was economically as under-developed as are present-day Malaya, Burma, Indonesia or Viet-nam, than which she was less well endowed by nature. Her post-war government of the 'Fatherland Front', cold-shouldered from the outset by the West, plunged wholeheartedly

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for a policy of 'mutual aid' with the Soviet Union—and later with the other People's Democracies of eastern Europe, which were 'going her way'. The result of this policy was forecast by the Western 'experts' and pseudo-friends of Bulgaria as being her inevitable reduction to 'colonial status' and to her 'economic exploitation' by the U.S.S.R.—which these same people now pretend to have actually taken place. The reflection of what has actually happened was to be seen, however, at the Leipzig Fair, where Bulgaria was exhibiting, beside her traditional agricultural products, rugs, embroideries, and textiles (*the output and exportable surplus of which has been greatly increased*), mine-locomotives, coal-transporters, diesel compressors, machine-tools, electrical equipment, tractors, and all kinds of agricultural machinery. Many of these she is actually exporting, moreover, to such countries as India and China.

According to the economic and political teachings to which we are accustomed in 'the West', this should be impossible, and the 'impossibility' of it would seem to be borne out by present conditions in the countries which are supposed to be 'benefiting' from the much-boosted 'Colombo Plan', or from American 'Fourth Point' aid. But it is a fact which cannot be gainsaid, and one which contains important lessons for the industrialised countries of the West, and most of all, perhaps, for Britain. How it has come about becomes obvious, however, if one considers why it is that so many of the large new industrial enterprises are named after foreign personalities, such as Lenin and Stalin, Klement Gottwald, Matyas Rakosi, Ernst Thälmann, and so on.

This is not for purely sentimental reasons, or as an expression of the international solidarity of the Left, nor, of course, does it indicate foreign ownership or continuing economic interest. It is in grateful recognition of help received from the countries with which the personalities concerned are, or were, connected, and as a reminder to the Bulgars—and especially to the Bulgars of generations to come—of the peoples to whom they are indebted for their new prosperity and independence.

First and foremost among these foreign benefactors is, of course, the U.S.S.R., which has, by its example, inspired the Bulgars to achieve what their forbears would have regarded as 'impossible'. Soviet scientists and agronomists have shown them how to produce cotton and other industrial crops to supply raw materials which had formerly to be imported, instead of treating their country as an export market, and exploiting its needs accordingly. Soviet hydro-

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logists and civil engineers have shown them how to conquer drought, and in doing so, to produce electricity to make good their power-deficiency. Soviet geologists have prospected their mountains for them, and have shown them how to do this for themselves, finding oil and a vast number of valuable minerals which they need for their new industries, or which they can export in payment for industrial plant imported from abroad. Soviet engineers and technologists have installed for them, and have shown them how to instal for themselves in future and to run, industrial plants of all kinds (including those for the production of their own iron and steel) which Soviet workers have expended their energy and skill to produce. For all this, the Bulgars are naturally grateful to the Soviet Union, but even more, perhaps, for the fact that they have been left as sole and absolute owners and masters of their new estate. You do not find Soviet citizens staying on, when their primary job is finished, as managers, chief engineers, and so on, lording it over Bulgarian underlings, or claiming dividends out of the wealth produced by Bulgarian workers, or royalties on the minerals they have located.

The same sort of thing has been done—and in the same sort of way—by the other People's Democracies and, more recently, by the German Democratic Republic. Thus, from Czechoslovakia have been received all the equipment for 15 electric-power stations, a complete 'Bat'a Works' for making footwear, machine-tools and equipment for engineering works and wood-working factories, refrigerating plant, locomotives and rolling-stock, motor vehicles, and agricultural machinery. Hungary has provided almost all the plant for an electric lamp factory at Sliven. Poland has provided railway equipment, iron-ore and other ores for the new metallurgical industry, chemicals, and raw materials for the textile industry. Rumania has provided all kinds of oil products, as might be expected, but also tractors. And from the German Democratic Republic have come chemicals and pharmaceutical products, optical instruments, and the whole of the textile-machinery for three huge new textile mills.

Much of this important business would surely have come to Britain, if Britain had been prepared to sell—and to sell on the same kind of fair terms as have been granted by the countries which have actually secured it—on terms of 'equality and mutual advantage'. But Britain has not been prepared to sell—on any terms—because the Board of Trade has feared that 'it might help the Russians', and because the Treasury and Foreign Office have been trying to impose extortionate conditions regarding payment of compensation to British investors in enterprises now nationalised, who

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must have had their money back several times over already in dividends on the men and women whose colonial exploitation paid those dividends.

The resultant loss to Britain may be relatively small, since the market here in question is a small one, but it must be borne in mind that the loss is in relation mainly to the products of her engineering industry, the increased export of which is generally recognised as being vitally important to her solvency, and which is becoming increasingly difficult, in the markets to which she confines herself, because of competition by her 'Western' rivals and of unfair trade practices by the United States. More important, though, is the fact that the example here cited as a lesson is selected merely because the relevant facts are ready to hand: multiply the loss suffered in Bulgaria by, say, fifty, and the formidable losses suffered in China, in a similar way and for the same reasons, will be appreciated. The markets that are being lost through our own Government's stupidity, unreasonableness, and refusal to be realistic, are ones which it may be found impossible to re-enter, if it persists in that attitude much longer. Without these markets there is small hope of avoiding the bankruptcy with which our country is now imminently threatened.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

THE NOTTINGHAM T.U.C.

This Congress met during the sharpest period yet reached in the crisis of British imperialism, as seen in the unparalleled unemployment and intensification of labour in the factories, wholesale dismissals through this intensification, wage reductions through the Labour Government's arbitration courts, after fierce resistance by the workers, tremendous revolt in China, and a new, wide upsurge in India and in Egypt. In this situation the main task before the Congress—if it laid any claim to represent the workers—was to have refuted the whole three years' policy of Mondism, and commenced the task of organising a counter-offensive of the working class against their exploiters. But these vital issues were not tackled, because the leadership which dominated the Congress is today part and parcel of the apparatus of capitalist exploitation; its whole function is to assist the capitalists out of the crisis by throwing the full burden upon the shoulders of the workers, meanwhile attempting to deceive them by using socialist phraseology and supporting high-sounding resolutions without any intention of fighting for them. This is the situation that must be grasped in order to understand the full force of events at Nottingham.

From *The Nottingham Trades Union Congress*, by Harry Pollitt, October, 1930.

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EDUCATION TODAY*

M. COOKE

THE Tory Minister of Education in his first speech to a teacher audience at Scarborough last Easter made statements which are extremely disturbing in their implications. In his view a mere fifteen to twenty-five per cent. of children should qualify for grammar and technical schools, and he did not subscribe to the view of some educationalists that the Grammar school stream could be enlarged. If a larger proportion of the population went to the university 'our tradition would be damaged and our assets wasted' and he (and presumably his Party) stood firmly for the selective system of education.

To see this last statement in its true perspective one has to look at our State educational system at the present moment. Compulsory education in this country lasts for ten years, from five to fifteen years of age. The main burden of the cost is borne nationally by Exchequer grants, but the range of local variations is so fantastic as to be unbelievable, except by an Englishman. Thus in some areas six per cent. go to grammar schools, in others approximately twenty per cent., and in others fifty per cent. Indeed, a child's chance of a grammar school education is dependent on local geography, and this in a country so small in square acres as England.

Halfway through the compulsory period the children are selected for grammar school education. However, the number selected for grammar school education is not dependent on any norm of attainment reached by the child, but on the actual number of grammar school places available. In the pre-war period there were approximately sufficient grammar school places to take in twenty per cent. of the population, but with the bulge in child population now approaching the secondary stage, that means less than twenty per cent. can go in the next decade. Indeed already children are failing to get into a grammar school who have scored marks in the selection test which would have got them a place well and truly three years ago.

Each area sets its own test, but in general new type 'objective' examinations are used. These tend to be more and more speed tests, for there is little or no opportunity for children to show any

For progressive views and news on education readers may wish to see Education Today and Tomorrow. *Six issues* 4s. *from Business Manager,* 18, *Hillcroft Crescent, Wembley, Middlesex.*

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individual reasoning ability. Most areas include an Intelligence Test which the psychologists now admit is really a test of verbal capacity and therefore either of environment or chance teaching. One such test includes knowledge of homely proverbs. Now such knowledge is so much part of the social environment of educated classes before 1930 that probably the framer of the test laboured under the idea that this knowledge is universal. But these proverbs are falling out of use in folk language today and the child who, asked to underline the sentence expressing the meaning of the proverb 'to sit on the fence', underlined 'to watch a football match without paying', was using intelligence albeit the testor marks her down.

Hence on what is almost a speed test, the child population is divided and those who have been speedier in learning go to a grammar school, while those who have been slower go to the modern secondary. Now a paradox arises which needs the pen of Dean Swift to satirize it. The children who have found learning in their first five years of schooling easier are then given various aids to help them even more. Their classes are smaller to begin with, their book allowance usually larger, while their buildings are the best the past could give. Those, however, who were a little slower in their first years are now taught in larger classes, while their books are fewer in number. Indeed, in the past few weeks, Messrs. Mumbo and Jumbo, the eminent educational psychologists, have discovered that whereas the 'intelligence quotient' of the grammar school child rises, that of the modern secondary school child drops; and being eminently honest men in their own field, for they are neither politicians nor administrators, they have therefore come to the conclusion that something must be lacking in secondary modern education. A fact which the majority of parents have stubbornly persisted in believing for the past ten years. Selection for all! Does that fine resounding statement need any further comment?

Indeed in the last week one educational psychologist, whilst protesting that he is not a sociologist, has definitely shown the class basis of the fight against comprehensive schools by writing that 'Many middle-class and other parents who most value education do not want their children to mix with semi-literates and budding delinquents'. Stripped of all nice verbiage, this is the real crux of the objection to a common education for all children. Actual scholarship today is no higher than in the last century when the public schools were actual comprehensive schools in attainment. They were acceptable because they were not comprehensive in social

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class. The psychologist turned sociologist is plaintively reiterating that society does not want to be reminded of the consequences of its sins. No child is born a potential semi-literate or a potential budding delinquent; the fact that there are any in the schools is an indictment of capitalist society and its mean economies at the expense of the children.

Education, however, is one of the services which can never really be crushed, for its life blood is youth, and youth can struggle in a way Sir David would scarcely recognise. Up and down the country there are secondary modern pupils who are proving the falsity of this statement that 'grammar school stream cannot be enlarged', or rather showing it up in its true light as a mean economy at the expense of the children.

In one administrative county over fifty per cent. of the secondary modern schools are entering candidates for the General Certificate of Education, and these pupils are gaining results which are equal to those of grammar school pupils. In one area, two girls in the same street went to the same junior school. Betty was in the 'A' stream and passed into a grammar school easily enough. Jane was in the 'B' form and went to the local modern secondary. At the end of five years, July, 1954, Betty gained a G.C.E with two passes, Jane gained one with four passes. These cases can be multiplied again and again. Vera with an I.Q. of one hundred and four in 1949 went to the local secondary modern school. She tried the over-age examination in 1950 for grammar school, and in 1951 she took the technical 13-plus examination to go to a school of art, for she was already showing promise in her art. However, she was not selected, so she finally stayed on at her secondary modern school. In 1954 Vera got her G.C.E. with six passes, including Art at advanced level with distinction. Then take the case of Peggy who failed to get a grammar school place at eleven and again at twelve. Peggy was unfortunate in that she had spent a lot of her childhood in bed and had missed so much arithmetic that to all intents and purposes she had no number sense. However, at sixteen she took her G.C.E. and gained it in four subjects, including Advanced English. She then went on to a grammar school, where within one year she added biology and Latin to her certificate. She is now getting ready for the University. These are just four cases from one school, but they can be multiplied over and over again and these are the children who the administrators say, both in public and to their parents, are not suited to a grammar school education.

These girls have proved their ability and by implication the ability

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of most of their contemporaries despite the most strenuous efforts on the part of the Ministry of Education, for, aware of the fact that a direct veto on modern secondary pupils taking a General Certificate Examination would evoke protests from all quarters, a more subtle form of veto was used. When the old school certificate was reformed, it was decided by the examining bodies that the pass mark should be raised. At first the examination was to be confined to the very small proportion of grammar school pupils going to the Universities. Pressure from the grammar schools altered this and brought the age limit down, but the raised pass mark was an attempt to place the examination out of reach for the eighty per cent. of child population who do not go to grammar schools.

As a nation we have to face the fact that, despite Sir David's confident statement, we are wasting our most precious asset, the brains of our young people. If some schools can do what I have shown, then obviously all schools could do it, and how much easier it would be if the necessary aids to learning were given to the schools; if the modern secondary school had the same number of teachers per pupil as the grammar schools, and if the child in that school could draw on the same number of books. The brains are there, those brains on which the country depends, as for its blood. Unfortunately, the Tory Minister of Education in that polished speech of his to the N.U.T. delegates at Scarborough gave no hint that his education policy would be enlightened, progressive or expansive. On the contrary, he and his class seem determined to maintain as far as possible a scarcity value in education. Their policy of selective education deliberately erects barriers to individual development and results in serious wastage of the nation's intellectual manpower. The 1944 Act promised secondary education for all: it is possible to abolish the selection examination altogether and to widen immeasurably the scope of educational opportunity. Here is an aim which can unite parents and teachers and all who have at heart the well-being of our children and the progress of our nation.

CORRECTIONS

Exceptional technical conditions due partly to holidays last month were responsible for the following errors :

On page 421, footnote 20, the word 'English' should read 'Scottish'.

On page 421, footnote 24 should read 'Havas—French Telegraphic Agency; Wolff—German Telegraphic Agency'.

On page 426, last paragraph, 'Corn Laws' should read 'Combination Laws'.

On page 423, 21st line, 'masterpieces' should read 'masterpiece'.

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GLOSSARY OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC WORDS

SANCHO PANZA

In the United States words often have a life of their own.
(*The Times* Washington correspondent).

AMERICAN foreign policy has often been found inconsistent, ambiguous, vacillating, non-coherent, hesitant, erratic, incalculable, practically non-existent and apt to defeat the understanding of the most expert of diplomatic experts. There is really nothing obscure about American foreign policy. The difficulties arise mainly from words which are known to be mischievous and can give the impression that American foreign policy is in constant need of interpretation, clarification, implementation, re-examination, redefinition and reappraisal. As America is very rich in diplomatic words, as in everything else, the main exponents of American foreign policy—the President, the State Department, the Pentagon, Senator Knowland and the Press—have at their disposal different vocabularies and are able to put different emphasis on words which may sound confusing.

The words for the consumption of the Administration and the public are probably coined and supplied by the numerous thought departments, planning staffs and ghost writers and are supposed to be the most expensive item of the Administration's expenditure. According to a recently published report of a 'task force' concerning paper management in Washington 'the Government creates and handles some 25 billion pieces of paper each year, exclusive of the tons of paper used in printing manuals, pamphlets, periodicals and the like'. How many and what kind of words they contain is anybody's guess. On all grounds the United States has richly earned the endearing nickname of 'Paper Tiger'.

Mr. Adlai Stevenson called the foreign policy of the Eisenhower Administration a 'policy of extravagant words'. There is some truth in this, though it is understandable that the American 'global thinking' and the assumptions of America's place and mission in the world inevitably produce sweeping statements peppered with extravagant words like 'drastic and dynamic policies', 'massive striking power', 'massive retaliation', 'massive gamble', 'agonising reappraisal', 'get tough policies', 'unleashing operations'.

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Since the United States began to take active part in world affairs it has been taken for granted that there are at least two basic foreign policies in the United States—that of the President and that of the State Department, which sometimes coincide and sometimes not. But since the Pentagon reached its maturity and Mr. Dulles became the Secretary of State the impression is often created that there are many Secretaries of State, many Mr. Dulleses and very many basic policies. But as it is often authoritatively denied that there are differences in policy between President Eisenhower, Mr. Dulles and the Pentagon, we may assume that the apparent differences arise merely from a division of diplomatic words. The President in his statements and messages puts forward ideas and basic principles, the Pentagon and Mr. Dulles implement, interpret and clarify by using different words, or putting different emphasis on words, or giving a little twist to the words here and there as the case may require. For instance, when President Eisenhower spoke of peace, negotiations, unity and equitable world trade, Mr. Dulles and the Pentagon rattled sabre-words like 'massive retaliation'; when the President declared readiness to negotiate and emphasised opportunities for negotiation, Mr. Dulles spoke of developing 'strong positions' and underlined dangers and drawbacks.

As President Eisenhower often leaves the troublesome business of foreign affairs in the capable hands of Mr. Dulles, and as Mr. Dulles knows all the answers and is the most envied possessor of words, this glossary is mainly based on Mr. Dulles' statements. For the sake of clearness I have tried to put the words into a more or less chronological order.

WORDS EXPLAINED

Words wane as well as wax.
—Fourth leader. *The Times*.

'*Drastic and dynamic policy*.' The Eisenhower Administration began by emphatically rejecting Mr. Truman's comparatively modest foreign policy of 'containment' and substituting a more 'drastic and dynamic' foreign policy of 'liberation'. Mr. Dulles was breaking his heart over injustices to peoples outside American influence, goodwill and protection, which included also peoples suffering under British colonialism. The new principles, according to *The Times* Washington Correspondent, 'sounded much like the principles that have governed American foreign policy for years'. But there was a difference in the way they were proclaimed—a difference that has been described as 'telling our allies—not asking them'.

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'Get tough' policy. 'The liberation' or 'the rolling back of the Iron Curtain' became the 'indisputable foundation for future foreign policy' and a 'solemn act of dedication' (Dulles). It was based on the argument that the United States is in a period of 'atomic plenty' while the Soviet Union was still in a period of 'atomic scarcity', but that in two years the latter will have 'atomic sufficiency' which was considered as good as 'atomic plenty'. All the 'diplomatic and moral initiatives' were supposed to be in American hands. Mr. Dulles 'kicked out' at the world problems. He toured Europe, Middle East and Asia laden with gifts of advice, guns, funds, technical guidance and threats. The allies had their job cut out to soothe American tempers and spare Mr. Dulles from 'revising his thinking', from 'agonising reappraisals' and to help him to defeat the 'go-it-alone' policy.

'Unleashing operation' or 'Psychological Warfare'. The 'unleashing operation' was the first drastic and dynamic action of the Administration. A psychological war was declared on China, on the Allies and on the American people themselves by creating an atmosphere of crisis. Speculation and rumours became part and parcel of American foreign policy. Psychological warfare was conducted with various psychological weapons including the hydrogen bomb, incitements to revolt and unrest and painting rosy pictures of 'convulsions' and 'tremors' in People's Democracies. Mr. Dulles produced a remarkable feat of juggling in trying to dissipate rumours and fears at home and among the allies and at the same time spreading rumours 'to keep the enemy guessing'.

'The Long Haul' and 'The New Look'. 1954 opened with a declaration by the President that

> there has been a great strategic change in the world during the past year. That precious intangible, the initiative, is becoming ours. . . . Our policy is free to develop along lines of our choice.

To Mr. Dulles, as usual, fell the duty to interpret and implement the President's message and thus the 'new concept' or the 'long haul' and the 'new look' or the 'new strategy' were born. The 'long haul' according to Mr. Dulles was meant to serve United States long-term interests and was based on the conception that, as the communists were planning for 'an entire historical era' the United States should do the same. This involved changes in basic policy and in strategy, but these could not be sudden or spectacular as they might cause 'panic among our friends, and miscalculated aggression by our enemies'.

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The friends found nothing new in the concept of the 'long haul', but a panic and worry not only among the friends but also among American people was called forth by the concept of the 'new look' or the 'new strategy'. The 'new look' meant a basic decision 'to depend primarily upon a great capacity to retaliate instantly by means and at places of our own choosing' and to place 'more reliance on deterrent power and less dependence on local defensive power'. Pressed at a Press Conference and in the Senate to reconcile 'the concept of instant retaliation', 'the concept of consultation with allies', and 'the concept of involvement in war only by act of Congress' Mr. Dulles with his usual adroitness dealt with everything satisfactorily, but left obscure what there was new in the 'new look'.

'Progression from massive retaliation, to massive stagnation, if not massive deterioration' (Washington Post). The 'clear, consistent and confident' foreign policy promised by President Eisenhower seemed to elude the Administration, so did the 'precious intangible, the initiative'. 'Washington is beset by so many dilemmas, anxieties and hesitations, so plagued by divided counsels, that the uncertainties and perplexities are worse than anything I have known in my five years here', wrote the *Sunday Times* representative (16.5.54). The deterrent strategy, massive retaliation, the hydrogen bomb, intervention, containment-minus, psychological warfare, bluffing and the threats were in the melting pot. Washington became disillusioned in the value and affection of the allies and friends:

> All those billions and billions of dollars poured out, and no return in human affection. It is like taking a woman out to a champagne supper and then being denied even a goodnight kiss.
>
> (Malcolm Muggeridge, *Daily Telegraph.*)

'Agonising reappraisal.' After Geneva a hush fell over the State Department and words were toned down. *The Times* wrote optimistically that 'the agonising reappraisal' is being conducted in silence. Whatever 'new look' may emerge it will, so far as can be seen, at least be given birth by the 'old diplomacy'. At the Manila Conference a 'sense of common destiny' with the Asian peoples was proclaimed. Mr. Dulles promised that the United States will assist the Asian peoples by 'developing the deterrent of mobile striking power'. The deep concern for South-East Asia was caused 'under the compulsion of historic principles'.

'New Thinking.' As the result of 'new thinking' a general 'overall' policy of 'talking to the Communists from the position of strength and trying to achieve a *modus vivendi*' was inaugurated by President

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Eisenhower. Mr. Dulles supplemented the 'new thinking' with the conception of 'forward strategy' which was intended to protect Europe from invasion by 'revolutionary changes' and to hold the Soviet Union 'on the threshold' by the use of tactical weapons.

'World Stalemate.' In his State of the Union message in the beginning of 1955 President Eisenhower introduced this new conception. The word 'stalemate' was coined, as the President later explained, in order to avoid using the word 'coexistence' because the latter might have been taken to mean appeasement in some minds.

'Uneasy stalemate.' An 'uneasy stalemate' was proclaimed as the policy towards China. In the event of challenge from China the 'doctrine of hot pursuit' rather than that of 'massive retaliation' would be invoked as a means of containment. 'The unleashing operation' or the psychological war on China continued to produce strange ambiguities. Mr. Truman described this operation as a 'barefaced political fraud'.

'Operation Alert.' On the eve of the Summit Conference Washington was emptied of all its governmental and political leaders and institutions by the grandiose 'Operation Alert', whether to make the leaders do their thinking better in hide-outs or to emphasise something or other, I do not know. The 'Operation Alert' was described by the *New York Post* as a 'sinister international joke' or as an amusing spectacle for children who like to see the grown-ups playing hide and seek on a world scale.

'New Friendliness.' On coming home from the Summit talks Mr. Dulles is reported to have said 'Well, we never gave much away', meaning that he wasn't 'taken for a sucker'. Some people may think that having used a particular vocabulary practically for three years, Mr. Dulles might find it difficult to choose new words for the new era of 'New Friendliness'. May I assure them that America is as rich in friendly, homely words as in extravagant words.

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UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF FREDERICK ENGELS (III)

March 14, 1892.

MY DEAR LAURA,

I have a whole heap of your letters before me, such a heap that I hardly dare look at it without being ashamed of myself—but you have no idea how I have been worked, interrupted, *tracassé, embêté* [pestered and plagued] etc. etc. by all sorts of people. My best working time—Jany. to April—has been frittered away and I have not had a moment to even look at the 3rd vol.[26] which I was determined to advance a good bit—and over the critical point—by Easter —All vanity of vanities. Now, my time up to a week after Easter is already engaged (by April 10 I shall have Bebel here for a fortnight or so, before that time I must go to Ryde to see Pumps who has had a sore time of it, Percy had 1) influenza 2) pneumonia and 3) and last is now laid up with pleurisy) and it will cost a damned effort of energy and a determination to reply to no letters whatever and do no work for no matter whom if I want to use May and June for the 3rd Vol.

But damn all this, you don't want to hear my grumbling. I am glad there are prospects of a daily paper for Paris, that will make up for many a mishap in other parts of the world. Though mishaps to our party are getting few and far between, unless we provoke them ourselves. We have such capital allies. Young William[27] brags about his ally God who so arranged all things from the creati[on of the]* world that they must turn out to the great glory of the Prussian monarchy in general and young William in particular. But the poor boy does not see that all the time he is a better ally *to us* than God ever was or will be to him; and ever if he was to see it, he could not help it, it's the nature of the beast!

My article[28] of the *Almanac* and *Neue Zeit*[29] has now been translated into Italian (*Critica Sociale*[30]—got me into a row with that *confusionario l'illustre Bovio*)[31] Roumanian (*Revista Sociala*)[32] Polish (*Przedswit*) and English (N.Y. *People*).

We have just come back (3.30 p.m.) from Highgate, the cemetery is in a disgusting state of soft clay, we had half a hundred weight sticking to each foot. On the grave Tussy (I suppose) had planted

*Paper torn.

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a small cypress, and one of the old crocus bulbs has come out in flower. The sprig of ivy which Motteler[33] had brought from Ulrich von Hutten's[34] grave on Ufnau island in the lake of Zürich, and which we planted after poor Nimmy's burial, having trained it on our balcony, had already been robbed of its best part last Summer, but what is left, now grows well and is rooted deeply in the soil so that no further desecration is possible.

Here we are also busy about the 1st of May. It is a beautiful play of intrigues woven and cut to pieces and woven afresh, Penelopeia-fashion. The 8 Hours Committee (Edward, Tussy and their friends) tried to be first in the field but the Trades Council, that reactionary rel[ict]* of the Old Trades Unions, was o[ut before]* them. Now the Trades Council and the S.D.F. are for the [ ]* friends, as against all the rest; at present they do not compete one with the other, and have common interest in putting down all 'outsiders'. So when the 8 Hours Com[mittee] proposed to act with the T[rades] C[ouncil], in the same way as last year, they got a complete rebuff. But then the 8 H[ours] C[ommittee] *secured the Park for themselves* before the T[rades] C[ouncil] had thought of it, and then again offered cooperation with the T[rades] C[ouncil] which was again haughtily declined. Then *both* bodies addressed the Metropolitan Radical Federation (of Radical Clubs) to cooperate with them; and the M[etropolitan] R[adical] F[ederation] decided to *mediate* but under all circumstances *to act with the 8 H[ours] C[ommittee]* to whom the whole movement from the origin was due. So that the T[rades] C[ouncil] and the S.D.F., as usual over-estimating their strength, have put themselves in an awkward position: either they must knuckle under, or have a separate demonstration, and bear the responsibility of the split. At all events *our* demonstration is now an assured success, whatever the others may do.

Hyndman gets more foolish every day. His blind hatred of the Germans makes him support the Berlin *'Unabhängige'* ['Independents'] and keep as his German chief of staff that outrageous scamp Gilles[35] who is evidently in the pay of the German Embassy and has been, with a lot of malcontents, turned out of the German Communist Club here (our old *'Verein'*). So that he has now lost even the little foreign support he had; in Germany they used to have some little regard to his position as leader of at least a *Section* of English socialists, but he has forfeited that; in France his friends Brousse

*Paper torn.

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and Co. are so down, that even H[yndman] himself had to protest against their 'hygienic' programme for the next congress. One does long for a good strong breath of revolutionary air to sweep away all these pettifogging *Jammer kerle* [woeful wretches]—but it is coming, slowly, slowly as everything does come among these *'verdammten Schleswig-Holsteiner'* (as Marx called the English) but when it comes it is *safe*.

I intended to enclose a line to Pau[l an]d* a letter from him from Marseilles—but it's getting dinner time, and I'm afraid of being stopped in the midst of it. I am afraid their new alliance with Granger and Co. will not turn out to their satisfaction. First of all, these men have shown that they are absolutely unreliable, when they passed over to Boulanger, and we can only expect being betrayed by them on the first occasion. Secondly, Paul says we must reap where Boulanger has sown. Exactly so, but *reap the masses* and *discard the leaders*, as the plan was with the Possibilists; but these leaders have no masses behind them, and are themselves highly undesirable bedfellows. Thirdly, they have crept into the Chamber *under false pretences* and are sure to be kicked out next election, so that it seems to me our friends are leaning upon an already broken reed. And as to *foreign policy*, fourthly, these men are *pledged Chauvinists*—otherwise they would not have got elected—and if Paul and friends form a party with them, they may be outvoted, kicked out, or driven to a split on the first occasion. I hope I may be wrong, but I am afraid I am not. The passage to Boulanger of these fellows was an unpardonable treason, and I'd rather have Vaillant than the whole lot of them—indeed I thought it a blessing that they had made themselves impossible.

Louise will write to you [as] soon as possible. She has been rather out of sorts for the last 8 days and is only just coming round again. Tomorrow I must go to see old Harney[36] at Richmond where he is ill with his windpipe and his rheumatic gout. And then you want me to say something to the Parisians about March 18.[37] I'll be hanged if I know what! *Mais nous verrons!* [But we shall see!]

Ever yours affectionately,

F.E.

Kind regards from Louise.

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*Paper damaged.

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London, Sept. 11, 1892.

MY DEAR LAURA,

I am here again since last Tuesday, still housebound, but mending. Louise I expect back on Wednesday, Bebel[38] fetched her from Vienna to Berlin and there she is now.

Thanks for the news about the paper. Then Luce being out of it, I take it that the old agreement has lost its binding power over the other signatories too, unless expressly renewed by them. With Luce, too, his friend Vignaud has, I suppose, also gone out (the man is unknown to me). Anyhow it looks as if a new combination was being tried—let us hope it will be successful and the last of its race.

Here we have had a very important event which will occupy *all* the Socialist parties of the Continent. As you will see from enclosed report, the Trades Union Congress deliberately rejected the invitation to the Zürich Congress and resolved to call together *'immediately'* an Eight Hours Congress of its own—and an International one too! This requires action on our part, and if possible, *concerted action of the whole continent.*

The English workmen are so deeply infected with the Parliamentary spirit of compromise that they cannot do a step in advance without at the same time taking 3/4 or 7/8 of a step backwards. Thus the sudden awakening of the Eight Hours' enthusiasm (3 years ago considered an impossibility, you know, by the very people who now clamour loudest after it) has almost succeeded in giving a reactionary character to that cry. It is to be the universal panacea, the one thing to be thought of. In their exultation at having secured so soon such a large and unexpected majority, the mass of the 8 hours' men now sacrifice everything that goes further, to the newly-converted 'Old' Unionists. This massacre of the Socialist Innocents is submitted to all the easier as the 'New' elements are divided, without general organization, personally unknown to each other, and have not as yet had the time to develop men enjoying the confidence of all; as you know, this can only be obtained here in Britain by what Ruge[39] called *die Kraft der wiederholten Erscheinung,* the effect of hawking your own person constantly for years before the public, *teste* [witness] Shipton, Cremer,[40] Howell[41] etc.

Anyhow the fact is there. The T.U.C. by a deliberate vote of 189 to 97, nearly 2 to 1, has placed itself outside the universal working men's movement and resolved to march apart. With every

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possible insult our invitation has been flung back in our faces. Not even an order to the Parl[iament] Com[mittee] to reply politely. Not even a formal motion based on the invitation; a counter-motion is brought in, and then the invitation has to slip in as an amendment, otherwise it would not have been noticed at all. You will see from the full report I shall send you what a trouble Will Thorne[42] had *to get it even brought before the Congress!* In fact the insult is complete.

Now what's to be done? This has to be considered seriously, and first of all by the French as their Marseilles Congress is before the Berlin one (Oct. 16). If we reply to the insult in the way it deserves, the Possibilists and Blanquists, *who are sure to go to the Tr[ades] Union Congress,* will make Capital out of it. On the other hand, if the Poss[ibilists] and Bl[anquists] go, and are *alone* of all Continental Socialists, then all the better for us. Therefore I consider it of the highest importance that our French friends *at once agree upon a common line of action with Bebel and the German Executive.* If Germany and France act together, Spain, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, probably Belgium, will follow, and Domela may go if he likes.

At present—I have not yet had Edward's personal report on the affair (he was there)—my opinion is this:

1) France and Germany ought at Mars[eilles] and Berlin to proclaim their intention to ignore this pseudo-Congress altogether.

2) They ought to do this in a resolution of firm, but quiet and not hostile language, which, if possible, should be identical for both and a model for the other nationalities; leaving the door open to future T[rades] U[nion] Congresses, and to single Trades Unions even at present, to return to the fold. This they are sure to do, I am sure many will regret their vote before many days are over.

3) If *mild* counsels should prevail, and it should be resolved to be present at this British Congress, for the sake of peace, then *one* delegate from each country ought to go and no more. And he must, *as a matter of form,* be elected and *mandaté* by the *Trades Union Congress,* or *Executive thereof* and be a bonafide workman or *he will not be admitted.* And this one delegate should depose a distinct protest.

I shall write to Bebel tomorrow on this matter. In the mean time please let me know *where* your people are and what can be done to come to an understanding with the Germans.

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I enclose you a specimen of the French correspondence the *Vorwärts*[43] is now printing and L[ie]bk[necht][44] will excuse it, no doubt, saying that if our people will not send reports he must take them where he can get them.

If I hear anything more from Edward before this letter goes, I shall put it in.

Ever yours,

F.E.

In a day or two I send you 2 books of mine. The Scotch paper goes by same post as this.

REFERENCES

[26]Volume 3 of *Capital* on which Engels was working.

[27]Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859-1941).

[28]This refers to Engels' article *Socialism in Germany* in *Almanach du Parti Ouvrier* for 1892, and in the *Neue Zeit*, 1891, No. 19.

[29]Chief theoretical journal of German Social Democracy, founded by Karl Kautsky in 1885.

[30]Fortnightly socialist journal published in Milan, edited by Turati.

[31]G. Bovio (1841-1903), Italian radical eclectic philosopher.

[32]Social Democratic journal, published in Roumania.

[33]Julius Motteler (1838-1908), publisher of the German socialist paper *Volkstaat*.

[34]Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523). German humanist, poet and leader of the Revolt in 1522.

[35]F. Gilles, a German journalist in London who was exposed by the German Social Democrats in 1891 as a police agent.

[36]George Julian Harney (1817-1897). One of the leaders of the left wing of the Chartists. Editor of the *Northern Star*, *The Red Republican* and organiser of the Fraternal Democrats.

[37]March 18. The Anniversary of the Paris Commune of 1871.

[38]August Bebel (1840-1913), the most important leader of German Social Democracy before the first world war.

[39]Arnold Ruge (1802-1880), German Left Hegelian, who edited with Marx the *Deutsch-Franzosische Jahrbucher* (1844) and afterwards broke with him. Engels here uses with double meaning a Hegelian phrase of which a literal translation would be 'the power of the repeated phenomenon'.

[40]W. R. Cremer (1838-1908). On the council of the First International; its first secretary. Left the International in 1866. Later a Liberal pacifist.

[41]George Howell (1833-1910), trade union leader. Sat on the council of the First International. Left very soon after and denounced Marx from the Lib.-Lab. standpoint.

[42]Will Thorne (1857-1946), leader of Gas Workers Union. Worked closely with Eleanor Marx; afterwards Labour Member of Parliament.

[43]*Vorwærts*. Daily organ of the German Social Democratic Party edited by Wilhelm Liebknecht.

[44]Wilhelm Liebknecht (1826-1900), one of the founders of the German Social Democratic Party, close friend of Marx and Engels.

(To be continued.)

CONTENTS OF PREVIOUS NUMBERS

AUGUST: *Geneva and After*, R.P.D.; *The Right to Strike*, A. L. Horner; *Peacemaking: New Phase*, Ivor Montagu; *Labour 'Rethinkers'*, James Klugmann; Unpublished Letters of Frederick Engels. Document of the Month: *For Peace in Malaya*. BOOK REVIEWS: *Peaceful Co-Existence* (Andrew Rothstein); *The Scalpel, The Sword* (S. Gordon and T. Allen); *The British Working Class Reader* (R. K. Webb); *Australian Government and Politics* (J. D. B. Miller); *Roman Britain* (I. A. Richmond); *Greek Myths* (Robert Graves); *M.R.A. Exposed* (S. S. Mariswamy); reviewed by D. N. Pritt, Q.C., Horace Joules, John Saville, Jessie Street, John Morris, R.B.

SEPTEMBER: *Britain's Economy and Peace* (R.P.D.); *Forward From Geneva* (Quæstor); *Means Test in Housing* (Thomas Balmer); *Unpublished Letters of Frederick Engels, II; A Prospect of Portland Place* (Judith Todd); *Heroic Story* (William Gallacher). BOOK REVIEWS: *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. III; The Trial of Jomo Kenyatta* (Montagu Slater); *East Africa Royal Commission Report; Economic Development in Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Thompson and Woodruff); reviewed by Benjamin Farrington, Ralph Millner, Leonard Barnes.

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Book Review

SOME RECENT CHINESE LITERATURE

IN a revolutionary epoch, art, equally with every other aspect of social advance, has its difficulties and setbacks as well as its triumphs, and Chinese writers have recently devoted a great deal of time to detailed discussion of one such incident—what Western newspapers called the Case of Hu Feng. Here it was seized on by observers as an example of the 'curbing' of a writer's freedom. In fact it was nothing of the sort. Hu Feng, a critic of considerable prominence, came under fire for his literary theories. As this criticism deepened it became apparent that Hu's literary theories hid a long-nursed hostility to the Chinese revolution, and indeed at this stage the Kuomintang on Formosa began to support him openly in his differences with his colleagues. Finally, in May and June of this year, a series of letters he had written to his followers over several years were sent to the Peking *People's Daily* by the recipients, who had broken with their former leader, and Hu Feng's close and active ties with the Kuomintang were immediately obvious.

But Hu Feng's hostility had been reflected in his very plausible theories of literature and the role of the writer, and if they did not have wide acceptance they had at least had wide currency, reinforced by Hu's reputation. Briefly, Hu denied the worth of Chinese classics like *Water Margin* (translated into English under the title *All Men Are Brothers*), dismissed China's literary heritage as wholly feudal, denigrated that burden of passionate protest that runs like a threnody through China's folk culture, and argued that there was no need for a writer to share the thought of peasants and workers, participate in their struggles or understand and press forward the dynamic changes within society. Even in a period of revolution (said Hu), a writer could stand aside from his fellow humans and write masterfully had he but a 'subjective fighting spirit'. Why join the masses? Or adopt a working class outlook?

Had Hu Feng's suggestions been followed, Chinese writers would have been forced back into that isolation from which many had slowly, and sometimes (because of the personal adjustment involved) painfully, emerged. They would have been *outside*, not *inside*. And they could not have grafted their art on to the native tree.

It would be foolish to blow up this incident to the dimensions of an ox, as some of China's detractors have tried to do. But the discussions and analyses to which it gave rise have been taken very seriously in China, and since it indicates one of the temptations which an unregenerate society had offered writer and artist alike—the cloudy pinnacle, the repose and folly of loneliness—anyone interested in following literary trends in China should read the excellent report in the latest issue (No. 3 of 1955) of the English-language quarterly, *Chinese Literature*. But don't stop there, because the magazine provides much evidence of positive literary accomplishment in its stories, critical articles, and translations of some of the very folk tales Hu Feng would have cast out as feudal rubbish. In this same issue, for instance, there are three Ming dynasty folk tales, delicate etchings, sometimes poignant, as in the story of the courtesan who buys her freedom only to be sold into slavery again by her lover: sometimes rollicking, as in the story of Lan Lung, a vagabond

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who robs and terrorises officials, merchants and monks. British readers may know Chinese classics like *Dream of the Red Chamber* and *Monkey*. They are less likely to know these folk legends because Western translators have neglected them, and less still of the background out of which they arose. *Chinese Literature* is beginning to remedy this and to provide critical and historical comment, and the Peking Foreign Languages Press has done us a further service with *The Dragon King's Daughter*, a collection of charming T'ang dynasty stories.

The Foreign Languages Press has also added to its list of translations of contemporary or near-contemporary literature, *Wall of Bronze*,* by Liu Ching, is a good and accurate story of the civil war. *Living Hell*,* by Liu Pai-yu, is an angry, searing account of a village in Kuomintang hands, and has an added interest in that its author was an illiterate peasant a few years ago. *Registration and Other Stories** includes one of the best stories of China's most popular author, Chao Shu-li, about a peasant marriage, which he tells with the peasant wit of which he is master. There is less on city life. The proper presentation of an industrial environment, the vivid 'human' treatment of factory workers, is something very new to Chinese literature, and something which Chinese writers are 'struggling for'. But in this latest crop of translations from the Chinese one book stands out, *The Hurricane*,* by Chou Li-po, an established writer now in his late forties, which triumphantly proves how rich is the writer's reward when he opens his door on the world.

The Hurricane is a long, vivid, hurrying novel of land reform in a north-east village, and Chou Li-po has many qualifications for tackling this theme. As a village teacher's son, he had the chance of going to school, though not for long. As a member of a family on the fringe of the peasantry, he knew the poverty of peasant existence, and two of his brothers were peasants. He became a compositor in Shanghai, threw himself into politics, was arrested and imprisoned by the Kuomintang, and eventually made his way to Yenan, where he worked as editor, war correspondent, teacher and translator, and has since made a reputation as a translator of Russian classics, including Pushkin and Sholokhov (there is a hint of Sholokhov's big canvasses in *The Hurricane*), and as a script writer. Then, in 1946, he went to north-east China to take part in the land reform movement, and it is his consequent identification with a bruised and fighting peasantry, apart from his own very real talent, which gives his book such singular truth. 'A writer cannot shut himself in a room and write only from imagination', he says in a preface describing how and why he wrote his novel. From this immersion, in people, in his characters, he has fashioned a story that is mature, peopled by characters in the round, and full of wit and humour. It may have shortcomings (which Chou himself tells us it has, and indicates them), yet for anyone who felt the force of the tempest aroused by land reform it carries an extraordinary conviction and has about it the smell of the Chinese earth, the savour and exaltation of its liberation.

WILLIAM LOCKE

* *The Dragon King's Daughter*, 3s; *Wall of Bronze* (Liu Ching), 3s 6d; *Living Hell* (Liu Pai-yu), 2s; *Registration and Other Stories*, (Contemporary Chinese Writers), 2s; *The Hurricane*, (Chou Li-po), 6s; *Chinese Literature*, Quarterly, 1s 6d; Foreign Languages Press, Peking, Collet's, London.

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The Man from Marylebone

THIS month I want to quote an unusual letter. *'I take a dozen monthly'*, this correspondent writes from Marylebone, *'and send them to different parts of England, the Colonies and America. This is as much as I can do, as I am only a poor hard-working clerk with very limited means. If other friends would do the same (according to their means) methinks a great impetus would be given to the spread of Social ideas, which can only elevate and rescue the proletarian from the grasp of the scoundrel middle-class and the cannibal capitalist. Hoping the paper is growing in circulation.'* The initials are G.E.H., and the letter appeared in the October, 1885, number of *The Commonweal*. Now we can match it today, on the eve of the Labour Party Conference, with this Scottish reader: 'Please send specimen copies to these friends, president and secretary of our local Labour Party branch, where we have recently got our resolution adopted for annual congress, calling for the Party to restate unequivocally its aim of socialism and its intention not to reform capitalism, but to replace it.' Striking echoes of the indignation of the rank-and-file at that Lib.-Lab.ism of 1885! And compare the next two, both from the same home county: 'As a Labour Party literature secretary, I am keenly interested in every likely item of socialist writing. May I therefore ask you to assist me by sending one or more copies? It will have my sympathetic consideration and will also be seen by several other keen socialists on our management committee.' The second is from a Communist Party branch secretary: 'As a long-term campaign here, we are aiming to increase the regular sale of progressive literature. After four weeks we have already had some good results. Now we feel that we need to *develop* further interest among our regulars, and I am accordingly writing to ask whether you can spare six specimen copies of some recent month, which we could give to them and then follow up later.' So perhaps you and your organisation could make successful use of our Midget L.M. and Specimen copy scheme. Forms on the back cover, as usual.

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